

Hazardous Site Cleanup Division

EPA UPDATE

Lower Darby Creek Area Superfund Site

February 2009

Current Status

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) is conducting independent Remedial Investigations (RIs) and Feasibility Studies (FSs) for the landfills associated with the Lower Darby Creek Area Site. These landfills are the Clearview Landfill and the Folcroft Landfill. The Clearview Landfill is located in Darby Township, Delaware County, on the border of Philadelphia County. The Folcroft Landfill is located in Folcroft Borough in Delaware County. The two landfills are situated two miles apart on Darby Creek.

EPA is the lead agency at the Clearview Landfill. The RI/FS currently being conducted at this location includes comprehensive environmental sampling of the soil, groundwater, surface water, stream sediments, landfill seeps, and air to determine the nature and extent of contamination.

These samples were collected from the landfill, the Philadelphia neighborhood park at its base, and the Darby and Cobbs Creeks. EPA installed monitoring wells on the landfill property in 2006. All of the data collected during the RIs will be used to develop the RI/FS Report which will include a human health assessment and an ecological assessment. EPA has completed the ecological risk assessment, is working on completing the human health risk assessment, and is preparing the RI Report. Once the risk assessments are complete, EPA will start evaluating cleanup alternatives for the FS Report.

In November 2006, EPA finalized a legal agreement with a group of potentially responsible parties (PRPs) to have them perform the RI/FS at the Folcroft Landfill. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) manages the Folcroft Landfill as part of

the John Heinz National Wildlife Refuge. Field work was completed in the summer of 2007. During this time, groundwater wells were installed and sampled, and soil samples were collected. This sampling data will be included in the RI/FS Report for the Folcroft Landfill. The PRPs have started the human health risk assessment and the ecological risk assessment. The PRPs and EPA are jointly working on the ecological risk assessment. The PRPs are assessing the ecological impacts on the Folcroft Landfill, and EPA is assessing the impacts on Darby Creek. In the summer of 2008, EPA collected stream and sediment samples from Darby Creek.

What is an RI/FS?

An RI/FS is a combined Remedial Investigation (RI) and Feasibility Study (FS). During the RI, data is collected to characterize site conditions; determine the nature of the waste; and assess risk to human health and the environment. The FS is the mechanism for the development, screening, and detailed evaluation of alternative remedial actions. The FS uses the data from the RI to screen

engineering technologies that are most likely to be effective at addressing the conditions identified by the RI. If needed, treatability studies may be conducted during the FS to evaluate the potential performance and cost of the treatment technologies that are being considered.

Risk Assessment

A human health risk assessment is an examination of potential scenarios through which humans may be exposed to site-related contaminants in the soil, surface water, sediment, groundwater or air.

An ecological risk assessment examines potential scenarios through which living organisms and their environment may be compromised by site-related contaminants.

EPA is committed to ensuring that any selected remedy is protective of both human health and the environment.

Site Description

The two landfills operated from the 1950's until the 1970's. They were eventually closed in the mid-1970's. During operation,

they disposed of a variety of wastes, including municipal, demolition, and hospital wastes.

During operation, the Folcroft Landfill was permitted to accept municipal, demolition and hospital wastes. In 1973, Folcroft Landfill was closed due to permit violations and improper management. Closing included re-grading the landfill to reduce the steep slopes, covering it with soil, and then seeding it.

In 1980, Congress authorized the Department of the Interior to purchase the Folcroft Landfill to increase the size of the John Heinz National Wildlife Refuge which bordered it.

The Clearview Landfill is located along the eastern bank of the Darby Creek near the border between Philadelphia and Delaware Counties. In 1973, after failing to comply with regulatory requirements, the Landfill was closed. The property has been used for other waste disposal operations since its closure. In 1976, the Philadelphia Redevelopment Authority covered and seeded a portion of the Landfill. Later, the Philadelphia Redevelopment

Authority constructed hundreds of residences around the Landfill.

Community Involvement Opportunities

EPA issued a Technical Assistance Grant (TAG) to the Darby Creek Valley Association (DCVA) in 2005. The TAG allowed DCVA to hire independent environmental consultants to help them understand and participate in EPA's cleanup decisions. DCVA distributes a quarterly newsletter about issues that impact the Darby Creek Watershed. The newsletter includes information, when appropriate, regarding EPA's cleanup of the Lower Darby Creek Area Superfund Site. When the RI/FS Reports are available, DCVA's TAG adviser will review the reports on behalf of the LDCA and help the group provide informed comments to EPA during the comment periods. Interested members of communities affected by the Lower Darby Creek Area Superfund Site may volunteer to participate in TAG activities. For more information about the TAG, contact Dr. John Furth at 610-622-3939.

**U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
Site Update for the Lower Darby Creek Area Superfund Site**



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about the

Lower Darby Creek Area Superfund Site

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Or visit our website at: www.epa.gov/reg3hscd
Scroll to "Choose a Site"; select "Pennsylvania" under " Superfund" select Lower Darby Creek